

REMARKS

Reconsideration and withdrawal of all grounds of rejection are respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Claims 1-8 and 12-24 were rejected. By entry of this Amendment, claims 1, 12 and 18 have been amended. No claims have been cancelled and no new claims have been added. Consequently, claims 1-8 and 12-24 remain pending.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-3 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over by U.S. Patent No. 6,065,051 to Steele et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,449,365 to Hodges et al.

Steele et al. is generally directed to an apparatus and method for providing flexible communications of data modification of Web resources between client browsers, where the Web resources are on a server. Specifically, the patent is directed to providing server notices to users on active browsers of data changes to the database in which they are operating. This prevents the "utilization of stale database data in the client user browser." ('051, col. 2, lines 42-43).

Independent claim 1 of the present invention is directed to a computer-implemented process. As pending, claim 1 reads as follows:

1. A method of communicating information between a plurality of client computers comprising the steps of:
 - a) providing data on a data source and communicating the data from the data source to one or more of a plurality of client computers in response to a request for data by said one or more client computers;
 - b) updating the data on the data source by sending data from one of the plurality of client computers to said data source; and
 - c) communicating a fact that the data available on the data source has been updated by communicating a client to client message from the one client computer that updated the data to other client computers directly via a network server thereby prompting said other client computers to access the updated data from the data source. (emphasis added)

The present invention provides a new and improved method of real time updates for users of databases that are shared by multiple users. The recited client to client message strategy directly via a network server is novel and non-obvious in view of the cited prior art. This feature

is clearly illustrated in Figure 2 of the present application as filed. The client to client direct messaging occurs on network 102, rather than elsewhere, e.g., the HTTP server 106 or the database server 104. "A client to client message from the client computer 115, 115, 117, 118 that updated the data is sent to other client computers on the network 102." (Applicant's specification, page 5, lines 28-31). This "direct messaging" strategy is also illustrated in Figure 3 of the present invention and discussed on page 7, lines 1-9 of the pending application.

As the Examiner has correctly stated, Steele et al. does not teach the limitation of "communicating a client to client message from the one client computer that updated the data to other client computers." The Examiner has cited Hodges et al. as a secondary reference in an attempt to cure this failure. Hodges et al. is directed toward a method and apparatus for providing notification of network conditions, specifically conditions related to a telecommunications network. Hodges discloses a complex notification system involving several levels of network management authority, a network 150, and three different servers, i.e., a network management server 120, a database server 130, and a notification server 140. ('365, col. 1, lines 18-54, and Figure 1).

More specifically, Hodges teaches a notification system having two types of users, i.e., NMCCC and non-NMCCC. ('365, col. 6, lines 22-24). The method begins when a user at the NMCCC receives a data state change indication via a workstation 110, views the initial information entered by the non-NMCCC user, modifies or adds information, and if necessary and at their own discretion, selects the recipient group(s) for a notification message. The NMCCC user then submits the information to NM server 120. ('365, col. 1, lines 37-42). Note that this process requires human selection regarding the notification group and the type of message. Further, the process does not transmit a change notice to another workstation 110 directly via the network server 150.

Continuing with the method taught by Hodges et al., the NM server 120 then transmits the information to database server 130 via the network 150. The database server 130 then stores the information. In alternative implementations, the NM server 120 stores the information on the NM server 120. ('365, col. 1, lines 43-48).

Next, the NM server 120 initiates communication with the notification server 140 over network 150. After establishing communication with notification server 140, the NM server 120 transmits a signal to the notification server 140 indicating that a notification message awaits

transmission. The notification server 140 processes the signal from NM server 120 and prepares the notification message for transmission to the previously designated recipients. Only after retrieving the necessary information from database server 130, the notification server 140 transmits the notification message and associated information to various distribution systems, selected by the user, that handle the actual transmission of the message to the intended recipients. ('365, col. 1, lines 49-65). The above-discussed novel differences between Hodges and the present invention are also clearly apparent when comparing Figure 2 of the Applicant's application with Figure 1 of Hodges et al.

In summary, the present invention achieves the desired client to client messaging without the burden and risk associated with two levels of user authority, multiple servers and additional process steps. As a result, the invention of claim 1 is neither shown nor suggested by Steele et al either alone or in combination with the Hodges et al. Moreover, the combination of Steele et al. and Hodges et al. would not result in the present invention recited in claim 1.

For at least the reasons discussed above claim 1 is allowable. Further, it is submitted that claims 2-3 and 8 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependence on allowable claim 1. Consequently, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

The Examiner has also rejected claims 12 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over by Steele et al. in view of Hodges et al.

For at least the reasons discussed above in regard to claim 1, the combination of Steele et al and Hodges et al. does not render independent claim 12 obvious. Therefore, claim 12 is allowable. Further, it is submitted that claim 14 is allowable at least by virtue of its dependence on allowable claim 12. Consequently, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

The Examiner has also rejected claims 18, 21 and 23 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over by Steele et al. in view of Hodges et al.

For at least the reasons discussed above in regard to claim 1, the combination of Steele et al and Hodges et al. does not render independent claim 18 obvious. Therefore, claim 18 is allowable. Further, it is submitted that claims 21 and 23 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependence on allowable claim 18. Consequently, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

The Examiner has rejected claims 4-7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over by Steele et al. in view of Hodges et al. further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,249,806 to Kohda et al. It is submitted that claims 4-7 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependence on allowable claim 1. Consequently, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

The Examiner has also rejected claims 22 and 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over by Steele et al. in view of Hodges et al. further in view of Kohda et al. It is submitted that claims 22 and 24 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependence on allowable claim 18. Consequently, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

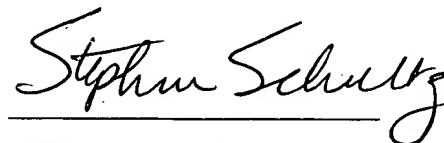
The Examiner has rejected claims 13, 15-17 and 19-20 for not teaching or defining any additional limitations over claims 1-8 and therefore are rejected for similar reasons. As discussed above, claims 1-8 are allowable. Consequently, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the invention of independent claims 1, 12 and 18 is patentable. Further, the subject matter of the remaining dependent claims is patentable at least by virtue of dependence on claims 1, 12 and 18. Therefore, it is believed that all pending claims of this application are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, entry of the Amendment and a subsequent early Notice of Allowance for all pending claims of this application is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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